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Score One for West in Game of Spying

By WAYNE JORDAN

SPYING has its Hall of Fame, but the men and women now playing the game internationally do their best to keep out of it.

Who wants to be Nathan Hale or Major Andre? Certainly not today's professionals, who know that dead heroes crack neither codes nor curtains, whether of iron or bamboo.

Like virtue, secret service is supposed to be it own reward. Our Central Intelligence Agency attested its devotion to that principle when, after the Bay of Pigs, it secretly presented a secret medal to Richard M. Bissell, its retiring deputy director for planning.

Deprived of newspaper clippings, the recipient was not permitted to wear his medal, to show it to anybody, or even to tell anybody he had it. Somehow the secret leaked, along with the word that other secret intelligence decorations have been similarly bestowed.

Despite such hush-hush, however, the grim game of espionage — never a spectator sport — does yield on rare occasions its reasonable equivalent of touchdowns or home runs. In the idiom of the Cold War, these are known as defections.

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AT THIS MOMENT America's intelligence experts and their allies are still in a joyful tizzy over the autumn defection of Russia's Lt. Col. Yevgeny Y. Runge. Reporting to United States authorities in Berlin, the colonel — an important cog in the KGB (Committee for State Security, Soviet counterpart of the CIA) — was promptly airlifted to Washington.

RICHARD M. BISSELL
Secretly Decorated

Ere the plane had landed, reasons for allied elation abounded. But first a further word about defections.

Lest you think this a negative sort of triumph, remember that your own team's successes in Cloak-and-Dagger Land can't be posted on scoreboards. Your spying apparatus may be functioning like a dream car in a commercial, collecting vital information at a great rate.

You can't tell your friends, including the tax-paying public, a thing about it. But let a sufficiently plausible enemy agent desert his team to join yours, and you can bring out the trumpets and megaphones for at least a day.

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IN COL. RUNGE'S case, tips radioed to Bonn from above the Atlantic by his interrogators promptly broke a spy ring that had been channeling documents and bugged conversations from the West German Foreign Office and the French embassy directly to Moscow. NATO's top secrets were part of the traffic.

Key to the Foreign Office phase of the operation was a trusted secretary, Mrs. Lenore Suetterlin. She used her pajamas to hang herself in her cell after Heinz Suetterlin admitted that he married her in 1960 while under Moscow's specific orders to find and wed a secretary who could be made an accomplice.

Others arrested included a janitor in the French embassy who had acquired a key to the military liaison office in 1958. The janitor's brother-in-law, a waiter, had been planting listening devices, and their joint output — whether on film or tape — was obviously pay dirt of richest variety for the Reds.

In some safe hideaway, we may presume, Col. Runge is still telling all. The trumpeting has subsided, but it served its purpose at a particularly opportune time.

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RECENT REVELATIONS concerning the long-time treason of Britain's trusted H. A. R. (Kim) Philby, who defected to Russia in 1963 — and his relationships with diplomats Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess, who defected in 1951 — had been as distressing to much of the Western World as to the House of Commons.

Runge helped clear the air.

Like football, spying involves both offensive and defensive teams — the spies and the spy-catchers. Canada claims the distinction of being the only important country not engaged in espionage in other countries. Its team of spy-catchers is a division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Whatever Russia may say, the West concedes that Soviet agents far outnumber those of any other country. All of them, reportedly, work for KGB or GRU, or both. KGB is the latest in a long succession of designators for an organization which older readers may best remember as OGPU. GRU is the military intelligence arm.

In contrast to Russia's two, the United States has nine secret services, including the offensive CIA and the defensive (with respect to spy-catching) FBI. And, like the Soviet agencies, ours are known to infiltrate each other.

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QUITE NATURALLY, in view of America's position in science, technology and industrial facilities, this country is credited with leadership in the use of electronic devices and other gadgets that — by projecting agents' eyes and ears most unbelievably — have revolutionized the art of spying.

On the human side, some of our best friends abroad have certain reservations. One criticism heard is that all too often an American agent, like a plainclothesman from a casting bureau, looks like what he is.

Against this, weigh the fact that for sheer erudition in many fields, CIA's personnel would be hard to match in any public or private institution of comparable size.

In their "Invisible Government," published by Random House, Washington correspondents David Wise and Thomas B. Ross observed:

"About 60 per cent of the senior 600 employes at the CIA have advanced degrees, many of them Ph.D's."

Although the top 20 executives had "always been largely from Ivy League colleges," these authors felt that critics who called CIA an Ivy League institution were overstating the case.

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IN DEFERENCE to the scholarship of CIA's employes, Wise and Ross noted that it had "its own digest-sized magazine, the most exclusive magazine in the world. It can't be purchased. It is not available at outside libraries. It is called Intelligence Articles."

This project, they continued: ". . . was begun because the CIA had so many former professors who, for the most part, cannot publish on the outside. Intelligence Articles provides an anonymous outlet for their scholarship."

Job security is another matter. In 1961, a veteran CIA officer who though he was being fired unjustly took his case into the federal courts. Invoking a Civil War ruling, Director Allen Dulles was upheld in his argument that employes of secret agencies had no such recourse at law.

In November of that year, President Kennedy contributed to CIA's literary legacy: "Your successes are unheralded — your failures are trumpeted."